academics, legislators, journalists, intellectuals and eminent personalities of India and Pakistan. Such interaction through bilateral visits would contribute to building a relationship of trust and friendship between the two countries.

Official Language Implementation Committee

3427. SHRI SHIVRAJ SINGH :
SHRIMATI SHEELA GAUTAM :
SHRI JAGDAMBI PRASAD YADAV :

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of Indian Embassies and Consulates, where Official Language Implementation committees have been constituted and functioning;

(b) the number of embassies where Hindi Officers, translators and Stenographers are working;

(c) the number of embassies where not a single Hindi Officers, or employee has been employed;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor;

(e) whether the post of Hindi Officers remained vacant for quite a long time in embassies even if there was vacancy for it;

(f) whether it is a fact that his Ministry neglects the Official Language Act and yearly Hindi programmes, while our embassies neglect the official language; and

(g) if so, the detials thereof and the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I.K. GUJRAL) : (a) to (g) Out of total of 156 currently operative Missions/ Posts and other Offices abroad under the Ministry of External Affairs, the Official Language Implementaion Committees have been constituted in 85 Indian Missions/Posts abroad and they are performing their prescribed functions.

There are two posts of Second Secretary (Hindi) in Port-of-Spain and Port Louis respectively. At present, posts of Attache (Hindi) are operative in Kathmandu, London and Paramaribo. 25 Indian Missions have been provided with Hindi Stenographers.

Designated posts of Hindi Officers have been provided in some Missions depending on their specific requirements and local conditions. In other places, suitable action is taken for promotion of Hindi in accordance with the local need and scope. In some countries, Hindi teachers are deputed from time to time under the bilateral agreements. Some Missions also organise Hindi Classes using suitably qualified members their staff or their families.

As regards appointments against the designated posts of Hindi Officials, immediate action is taken as and when a vacancy arises.

Like all other Government of India Offices, the Ministry of External Affairs and the Indian Missions and Posts abroad make all possible efforts to achive the targets laid down in the Annual Programme for the implementation of the official language policy of the Government. Besides the designated Hindi Officers/ Teachers wherever required, the entire IFS (A) cadre and a majority of the other cadres of MEA possess working knowledge of Hindi. All possible avenues are explored to pomote the use of Hindi. The question of neglecting the Official Language Act or the official language in any way does not arise.

[English]

Assistance to Madhya Pradesh under Mid Day Meal Scheme

3428. SHRI VIJAY KUMAR KHANDELWAL : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are providing financial assistance to States for Mid-day meal scheme;

(b) if so, the allocations made and utilised in Madhya Pradesh during each of the last two years;

(c) whether complaints of corruption, adulteration, practical difficulties have been noticed; and

(d) if so, whether the Government propose to reassess the utility and practicality of the scheme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MUHI RAM SAIKIA): (a) and (b) Under the National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education,popularly known as Mid-day Meal Scheme, funds are released to the Food Corporation of India (FCI) which supplies foodgrains to the States/Union Territories including Madhya Pradesh.

According to information furnished by FCI, foodgrains allocated to Madhya Pradesh and lifted by the State during the last two years are as under :

Year	Allocation	Lifted (Metric tonnes)
1995-96	81,239	78,996
1996-97	1,78,317	1,05,374

(c) and (d) This Department has not received any complaint in this regard so far. However, according to information given by Government of Madhya Pradesh, complaints of non-provision of Mid day Meal have been noticed. In view of the financial and practical difficulties in providing hot cooked meals to children, State Government has decided to provide foodgrains to eligible children in 156 blocks covered under the scheme in 1996-97.